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To: Rockport Planning Board
Rockport, Maine
Subject: Central Street Hotel Design

From: Stephen Smith
Rockport, Maine

I have been a Rockport resident since 1979 and started my architectural practice in 1980.

Since that time, I have designed a variety of buildings including municipal buildings, libraries, medical facilities, multi-family housing, residences, and the renovation of historic structures. I also served on numerous town committees including ten years on the Zoning Board of Appeals [Chairman] and the Ordinance Review Committee [Vice Chairman].

Regarding my architectural practice, I was selected in 2000 to renovate and design the addition to the 1904 Rockland Carnegie Library and earlier the historic Pendleton Library on Islesboro.

In addition to the above projects, I have renovated and designed additions to numerous historic structures including Nelson Doubleday Plantation in South Carolina and an 1803 residence on Chestnut Street in Camden. Recently our firm was selected to design the new Library in Rockport which provides the anchor to the historic downtown district.

As an Architect and a Rockport resident, I am responding to the current issue concerning the design of the Central Street Hotel. It should be noted that both Shepherd Block and Union Hall are listed as historic structures and the projects received tax credits after their renovation by the previous owner.

The standards provided by the Department of Interior are clearly stated: *"for new additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a*

manner that if removed in the future the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. In addition, “ the new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment ”.

The new hotel design is certainly compatible with the adjacent historic buildings as exemplified using restoration brick, the entry arch façade, the installation of granite lintels and trim, and the overall scale and massing of the building.

As noted in the Department of Interior guidelines: “the *new work shall be differentiated from the old*” which has been done by the use of balconies and a new fenestration of the building. Because these elements have been incorporated into the building design does not mean the building is incompatible with the adjacent structure. As noted, the hotel architecture is in fact compatible with its surroundings based on the Department of Interior regulations and the Rockport Land Use Ordinance. There are many small and national historic projects which like the Central Street Hotel, represent good examples which follow the historic guidelines.

Moreover, there is one major ongoing historic project which represents the current interpretation in renovating an historic structure. This is the renovation of the 2000 year old Roman Colosseum where they have designed and are installing a modern rotating retractable wood floor with green technology over a humidity controlled lower level. Most would think this design was very inappropriate due to the historic importance of the Colosseum. However, today’s regulations allow buildings to incorporate new elements without destroying the historic value of the structure.

In summary, the Central Street Hotel design incorporates the above elements with a blend of traditional materials, and details while incorporating small balconies and a more modern fenestration. This project is certainly in keeping with all historic regulations and architectural standards within the profession and our Land Use Ordinance.

Stephen G. Smith, AIA